



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Office of the Chief
Information Officer**

**1400 Independence
Avenue SW**

**Washington, DC
20250**

Honorable Franklin D. Raines
Director
Office of Management and Budget
Old Executive Office Building, Room 252
17th Street and Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20502

MAY 19 1997

Dear Mr. Raines:

In response to your May 7, 1997 memorandum, "Computer Difficulties Due to the Year 2000 -- Progress Reports," the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is providing the requested information in the enclosed report. USDA considers Year 2000 a major initiative for the Department and will continue to move forward to correct Year 2000 problems before December 31, 1999.

If you have any questions or comments, please have a member of your staff contact Sandra Ginyard, Year 2000 Project Manager, at (202) 720-8478.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne F. Thomson Reed", is written over a horizontal line.

Anne F. Thomson Reed
Acting Chief Information Officer

Enclosure

cc: Edward Springer

Status of Department of Agriculture Year 2000 Efforts
Quarterly Report for May 1997

1. **Organizational Responsibilities.** Describe how your Department/Agency is organized to track progress in addressing the Year 2000 problem.

Within the Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) has overall responsibility for oversight and guidance for the Year 2000 effort. Each USDA Agency is responsible for the execution and implementation of Year 2000 modifications to their systems. The OCIO will be tracking progress through agency quarterly reporting and monthly status reports. The OCIO is providing guidance to the agencies following the approach for executing the applicable key process areas in the life cycle phases of the Year 2000 compliance as described in the GAO document, Year 2000 Computing Crisis: An Assessment Guide. The approaches identify indicators and measures that will be used to baseline and track progress in each phase to achieve Year 2000 compliance. OCIO's Year 2000 working group, with agency representatives, meets monthly to provide updates on Year 2000 efforts. All agency status reports are reviewed and approved by agency Senior Information Resources Management Officials (SIRMO) prior to their submission to the OCIO.

- a. Describe the responsible organizations for the addressing the Year 2000 problem within your Department/Agency and provide an organization chart.

The USDA consists of 31 agencies of varying sizes and a diverse inventory of systems and devices that may exhibit the Year 2000 problems. The OCIO has assigned a Year 2000 project manager who leads the Department Year 2000 working group. The project manager maintains an open line of communication with agency representatives to ensure information flows across departmental functional areas. Each of the USDA agencies are responsible for addressing the Year 2000 problem on its own and many have established internal Year 2000 teams, methodologies, and reporting mechanisms to track their status. Each agency SIRMO is accountable to the agency Administrator to ensure that the Year 2000 problem is addressed or otherwise managed for their agency. The CIO has overall oversight responsibility and is accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture for this function.

- b. Describe your Department/Agency's processes for assuring internal accountability of the responsible organizations. Include any quantitative measures used to track performance and other methods to determine whether the responsible organizations are performing according to plan.

In the future OCIO will provide copies of the USDA's Year 2000 quarterly reports to USDA's executive management prior to the delivery to the Office of Management and Budget. A cover memo which summarizes the mission level and Department wide performance in addressing the Year 2000 problem and highlights of the risk areas will be included in the distribution.

USDA is establishing the following quantitative measures to track performance:

- total number of systems
- number of mission critical systems
- number of non-mission critical systems
- of mission critical, non-mission critical systems:
 - number compliant, non-compliant
 - number being replaced, repaired, retired
 - number assessed, renovated, validated, certified and implemented
- number of systems meeting established milestones
- number of systems behind schedule
- total dollars estimated compared to actual dollars spent
- total number of non-IT systems/devices requiring modifications
- total number of non-IT compliant system/devices
- total number of non-IT systems/devices being replaced or repaired

- c. Describe the management actions taken and by whom, when a responsible organization falls behind schedule.

The OCIO will perform reviews and evaluate agency progress. For any agency that has fallen behind schedule, focused monthly reviews of progress will be performed until corrective actions have taken effect. Each agency Administrator is responsible for undertaking the necessary management actions deemed necessary to get Year 2000 projects on course. Agencies are required to submit a monthly status report to OCIO until the organization activity is back on schedule.

- d. Describe how internal performance reports are verified.

Independent verification and validation of the agency Year 2000 plans and efforts is being initiated by the OCIO on an ad hoc basis or as deemed

necessary by the agency's perceived lack of progress in addressing the Year 2000 problem. In addition, USDA's Office of Inspector General is beginning a series of inspections and reviews on the status of Year 2000 efforts in the USDA's agencies.

2. **Status.** Provide a report of the status of agency efforts to address the year 2000 computer problem which includes:

- a. An agency-wide status of the total number of mission-critical systems.

Total Number of Mission-Critical	Number Already Compliant	Number being Replaced	Number being Repaired	Number being Retired
684	80	43	469	87

- b. The status of the mission-critical systems being repaired. The status should be presented as a percentage of mission-critical systems that have completed the Assessment, Renovation, Validation, and Implementation Phase consistent with the Agency's milestones as follows:

	Assessment	Renovation	Validation	Implementation
Milestones	6/97	9/98	9/99	10/99
% Completed	41*	3	0	0

*Note: Information provided is a composite of USDA's 31 agencies. The percentages identified represent systems that have fully completed the phase requirements. The remaining systems are at various states of completion. We will keep you updated on the progress of these systems.

- c. A brief narrative description of where significant progress has been made in addressing the problem in mission-critical systems, systems other than mission-critical systems and problems beyond information technology systems (e.g. facilities, bio-medical devices, etc.) Also describe any significant problems affecting progress. Include a discussion of progress and any problems in acquiring and retaining skilled personnel (government and contractor) to fix systems.

USDA has made significant progress in several areas. Evaluating and assessing systems to determine mission-criticality provided USDA with information needed to prioritize re-engineering or repairing of systems that perform major functions within mission areas and to retire old systems. USDA agencies are working in partnership with each other and other federal agencies to develop work plans and methodologies to accomplish Year 2000 activities.

USDA has held several awareness seminars to identify areas beyond information technology systems. As a result, issues in the areas of facilities, security, equipment used in laboratories, safety and health have been identified.

Lack of progress in assessment may be a problem affecting the progress for correcting the Year 2000 problem. As noted above, USDA has completed an assessment of 41% of the 469 systems being repaired. Many of the systems within USDA consist of several hundred software applications, some of which require specialized skilled staff to correct. USDA agencies are working to make the necessary adjustment to accommodate the issue, such as acquiring contractor support. Funding and resources will also affect the progress of correcting the Year 2000 problem. USDA, along with the federal and private sector are bound by the December 31, 1999 deadline and with the decline of funding, accomplishing such a monumental task is challenging. To date, we have not encountered problems retaining skilled personnel but cannot be assured of the availability of skilled personnel in the future.

3. **Cost.** If estimates of year 2000 information technology costs have changed from the amounts most recently reported to OMB, report the new estimates. Report totals in millions of dollars for FY 1996 through FY 2000.

Fiscal Year	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Cost	3.7	22.1	37.3	27.8	6.3	97.8

4. **Exception Report on Systems.** None at this time

U.S. Department of Agriculture Year 2000 Program Office Organization Chart

